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DOCTOR STRANGE®

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73

OCT



FINAL TRIUMPH

IN A REALM UNDREAMED OF,
IN A UNIVERSE BEYOND
OUR OWN...

...THE HEAVENS
ARE SUDDENLY
ABLAZE WITH
AN IMAGE
HIGHER THAN
THE GREATEST
OF CITIES!

HEAR ME, ALL...
THE REBELLION
HAS BEEN BROKEN!
UMAR REIGNS
SUPREME!!

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THROUGHOUT THE LENGTH
AND BREADTH OF THIS
DARK DIMENSION,
THERE IS NOT A SINGLE
BEING WHO DOES NOT
HEAR...



THE LAST OF THE
REBEL FORCES HAVE
FALLEN BEFORE THE
MIGHT OF MY ROYAL
GUARDS...NO LONGER
SHALL THEY MAKE A
MOCKERY OF OUR
ORDER!



THERE MAY
BE THOSE
AMONG YOU WHO
SUPPORTED THE
REBELS.



TO THOSE REBEL
SYMPATHIZERS,
I SAY...GIVE
YOURSELVES
UP!



THOSE WHOM
YOU AIDED
HAVE BEEN
VANQUISHED--



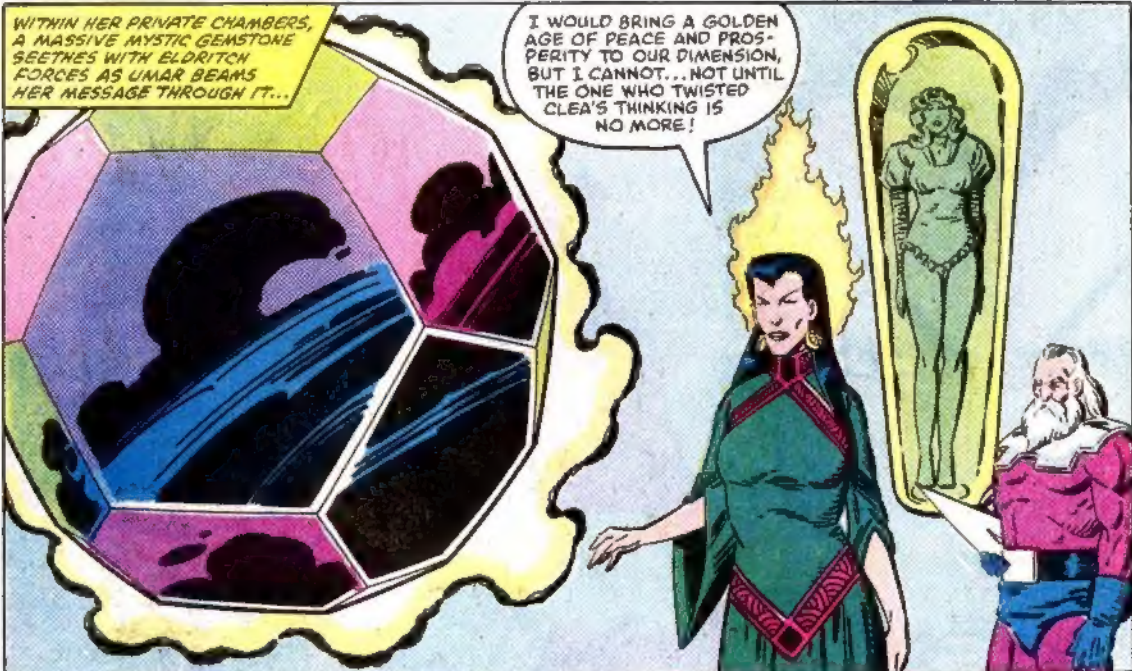
--AND THE
TREACHEROUS CLEA
HAS BEEN CAPTURED!
ONLY HER ALIEN MASTER
IS STILL AT LARGE...
AND HE SHALL NOT
ELUDE ME MUCH
LONGER!



CLEA...
NOT CLEA,
TOO?

WITHIN HER PRIVATE CHAMBERS,
A MASSIVE MYSTIC GEMSTONE
SEEKES WITH ELDRITCH
FORCES AS UMAR BEAMS
HER MESSAGE THROUGH IT...

I WOULD BRING A GOLDEN
AGE OF PEACE AND PROSPERITY
TO OUR DIMENSION,
BUT I CANNOT... NOT UNTIL
THE ONE WHO TWISTED
CLEA'S THINKING IS
NO MORE!



YOU KNOW THE ONE OF
WHOM I SPEAK... THE
EARTH SORCERER,
DOCTOR STRANGE!
HE MAY BE ABROAD
IN OUR LANDS!

THOSE WHO AID
IN HIS DOWNFALL
SHALL BE REWARDED.
THOSE WHO AID HIM
SHALL SHARE HIS
FATE!



WITH THAT, THE
IMAGE OF UMAR
FADES FROM THE
SKIES.

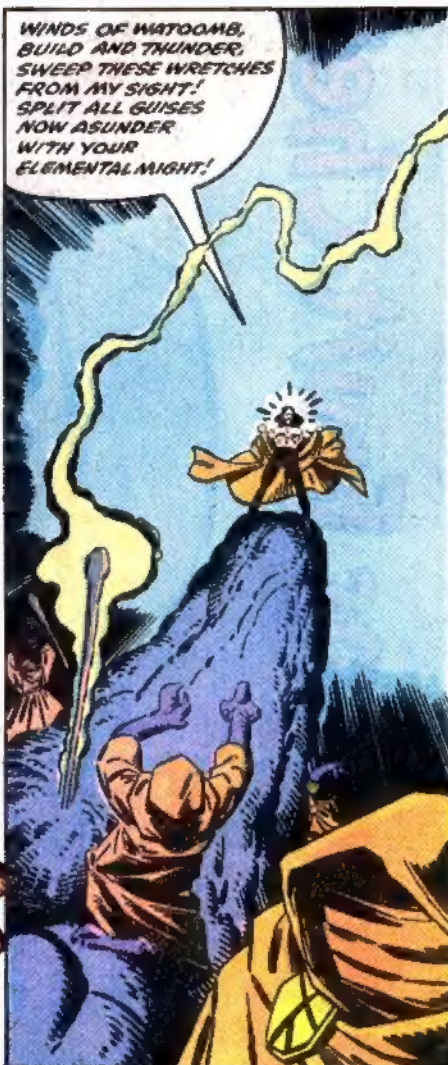
AND IN A REMOTE
CORNER OF THE
DIMENSION...

YOU CANNOT MASQUERADE AS
AN OUTCAST ANY LONGER,
DOCTOR! YOUR VERY PRESENCE
HERE JEOPARDIZES THE LIVES
OF US ALL!

BEST YOU FLEE
THIS REALITY
WHILE YOU CAN.

FLEE--?
ARE YOU MAD?
UMAR MUST BE
STOPPED! YOU
MUST HELP
ME!





EVEN AS THE HOLLOW STAFF SHATTERS
FROM THE FORCE OF STRANGE'S SPELL--



--HIS EN-
CHANTED CLOAK OF
LEVITATION
FLIES FROM
ITS FORMER
HIDING PLACE...

... AND SWIFTLY SETTLES ABOUT
ITS MASTER'S SHOULDERS.

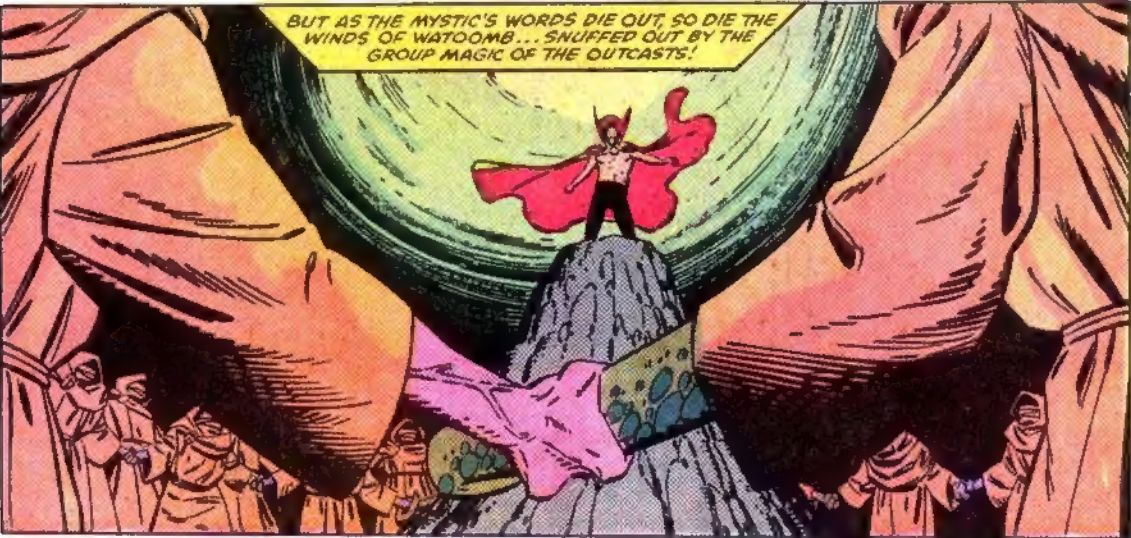


YOU'VE ABANDONED WHATEVER
SPIRIT YOU ONCE MIGHT HAVE HAD!
WELL, SATANNISH TAKE YOU ALL!



I SHALL
CONFRONT
UMAR ALONE!

BUT AS THE MYSTIC'S WORDS DIE OUT, SO DIE THE
WINDS OF WATOOMB... SNUFFED OUT BY THE
GROUP MAGIC OF THE OUTCASTS!



FOR A MOMENT, ALL IS DEATHLY QUIET. AND THEN,
LIKE AN ANGRY ROAR, THE COMBINED THOUGHTS
OF THE CIRCLE OF OUTCASTS SHATTER THE
STILLNESS...



NO, SORCERER...
NO, YOU SHALL
NOT!!

WHILE, WITHIN THE PALACE ROYALE...

WELL DONE, CAPTAIN ORINI. THE REBELLION WILL NEVER RECOVER FROM YOUR CAPTURE OF YOUR MISBEGOTTEN DAUGHTER.

OUR DAUGHTER, MISTRESS.

DO NOT SPEAK OF THAT!

WHAT WILL BECOME OF HER?

WHEN DOCTOR STRANGE IS IN MY POWER, I SHALL PUT THEM BOTH TO DEATH, BEFORE THE EYES OF THEIR REBEL FORCE.

THEN, THE REBELS STILL LIVE?

"YES... FOR NOW. THEY WERE AMBUSHED BY A SPECIAL SQUAD OF THE ROYAL GUARD WHICH I HAD SUPPLIED WITH WARP-CLOAKS.

"I DON'T NEED TO TELL YOU WHAT DWELLS WITHIN THOSE WARPS!

"AFTERWARDS, THE REBELS WERE DISGORGED IN MY DUNGEONS--

ONCE THE EARTHMAN IS MINE, THEY SHALL REGRET THEY EVER FOLLOWED HIM!

MISTRESS, YOU WERE WRONG ABOUT DOCTOR STRANGE.

CLEA LEFT HIM TO LEAD THE REBELLION. HE HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH IT.

REALLY? WELL... NO MATTER!

"--NEATLY SEALED IN ENCASEMENT PODS."

HE BECAME INVOLVED ONLY AFTER YOUR ATTACKS ON HIM.

AFTER I ELIMINATE HIM, NO ONE WILL DARE OPPOSE ME!

AND, AS UMAR CONTEMPLATES HER FOE'S
DEMISE, A SOLEMN PROCESSION APPROACHES
THE HEAVILY FORTIFIED ENTRANCE OF HER
PALACE...



WHAT IS THIS?
BY THE POWER
OF THE FLAME,
I COMMAND YOU
TO HALT!

OUTCASTS ARE FORBIDDEN
TO ENTER THE PALACE!
WHAT DO YOU WANT?



WELL ???

EASY, MAYR...THEY'RE NO THREAT
TO UMAR. THEY CAN'T EVEN SPEAK,
REMEMBER? LOOK, THE SCROLL
PROBABLY EXPLAINS EVERYTHING.



LET'S SEE... "WITH MOST RE-
SPECTFUL OBEISANCE TO THE
MIGHTY UMAR--- WISH TO MAKE
AMENDS FOR OUR PAST WRONGS
--- AND SO, WE PRESENT YOU
WITH THAT WHICH YOU
MOST DESIRE..."

I DON'T
BELIEVE
THIS...



...THEY'VE CAPTURED
DOCTOR STRANGE!!

BY UMAR'S
FLAME,
HOW--?



WHO CARES HOW?
THIS WILL MAKE
OUR FORTUNES!

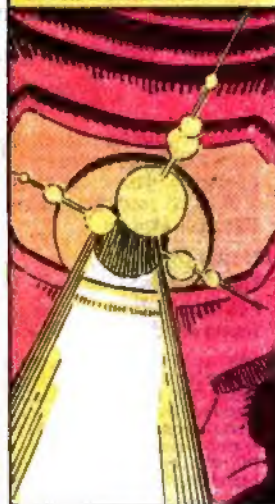
ALL RIGHT,
WE'LL TAKE
HIM FROM
HERE!



BUT AS THE EAGER SOLDIERS
DRAG THEIR CAPTIVE BENEATH
THE IMPOSING PRESENCE OF
THE GUARDIAN...



--- A PIERCING BEAM FLARES
FROM THE STONE BEHE-
MOTH'S SINGLE ORB...



...AND IN ITS GLARE, AN ILLUSION STANDS REVEALED!

HEY, HIS BONDS--!
HE'S NOT--!

I CAN'T WASTE
ANY MORE TIME
WITH THESE TWO!
I MUST GAIN
ENTRY FOR THE
OUTCASTS BEFORE
OTHERS NOTICE
US!

THE ROBED ONES
CANNOT PASS THE
GUARDIAN'S WILL-
NUMBING BEAM...
BUT THERE IS A
STRONGER LIGHT AT
MY COMMAND!

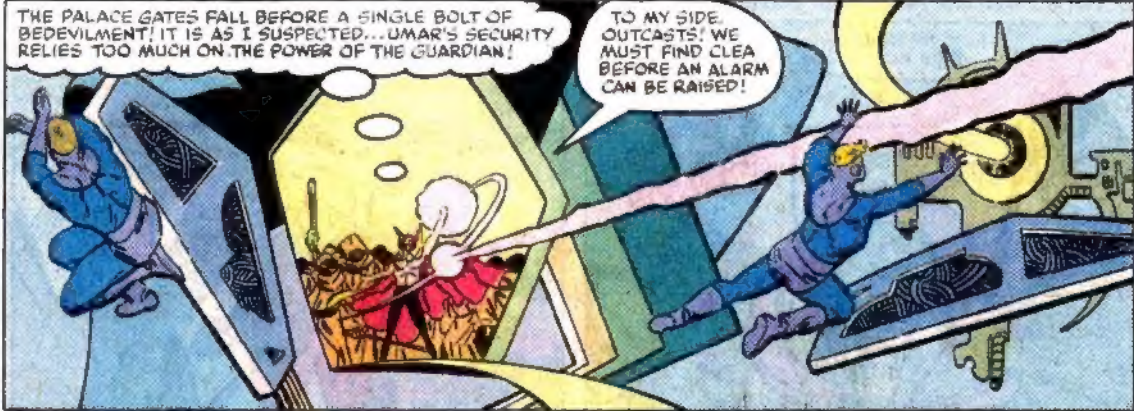
WITH BUT A THOUGHT,
THE DOCTOR OPENS
THE ARCANIC AMULET AT HIS
THROAT--

--AND THE AWESOME
LIGHT OF AGAMOTTO
BLAZES FORTH, ITS
RADIANCE OVERWHELM-
ING THE G'URANTIC
BEAM...

... AND FORCING SHUT
THE STONY GUARDIAN'S
BEDAZZLED EYE.

THE PALACE GATES FALL BEFORE A SINGLE BOLT OF BEDEVILMENT! IT IS AS I SUSPECTED... UMAR'S SECURITY RELIES TOO MUCH ON THE POWER OF THE GUARDIAN!

TO MY SIDE, OUTCASTS! WE MUST FIND CLEA BEFORE AN ALARM CAN BE RAISED!



BUT AS STRANGE URGES THE OTHERS ON, A TELEPATHIC MESSAGE STOPS HIM IN HIS TRACKS...

STEPHEN-- I SENSED YOUR COMING AND USED MY MAGIC TO HIDE YOUR PRESENCE FROM UMAR... I AM NOT AS HELPLESS AS SHE THINKS!

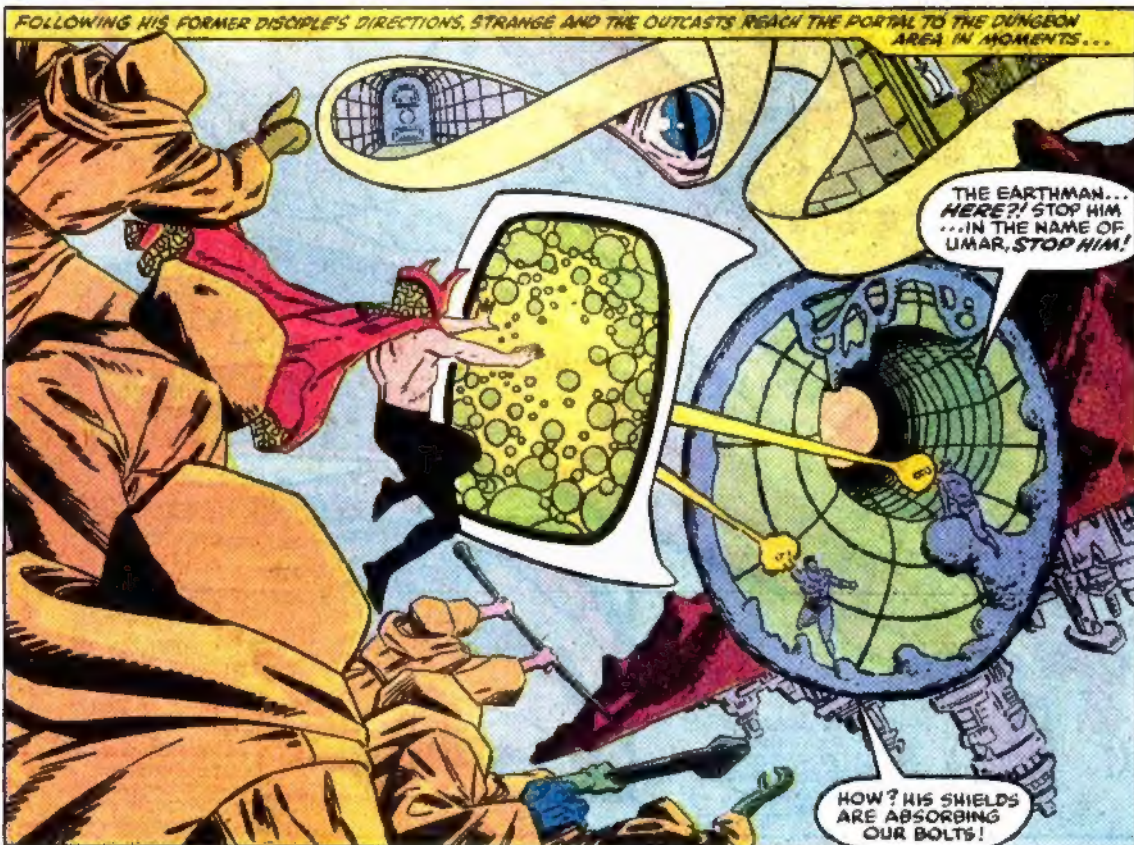
DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME... YOU MUST FREE THE OTHERS--!



FOLLOWING HIS FORMER DISCIPLE'S DIRECTIONS, STRANGE AND THE OUTCASTS REACH THE PORTAL TO THE DUNGEON AREA IN MOMENTS...

THE EARTHMAN... HERE?! STOP HIM... IN THE NAME OF UMAR, STOP HIM!

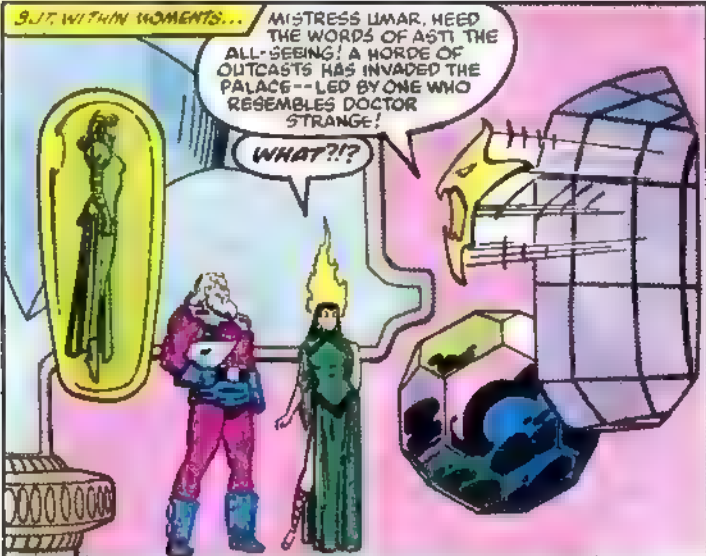
HOW? HIS SHIELDS ARE ABSORBING OUR BOLTS!



3.17. WITHIN MOMENTS...

MISTRESS UMAR, HEED THE WORDS OF ASTI THE ALL-SEEING! A HORDE OF OUTCASTS HAS INVADDED THE PALACE---LED BY ONE WHO RESEMBLES DOCTOR STRANGE!

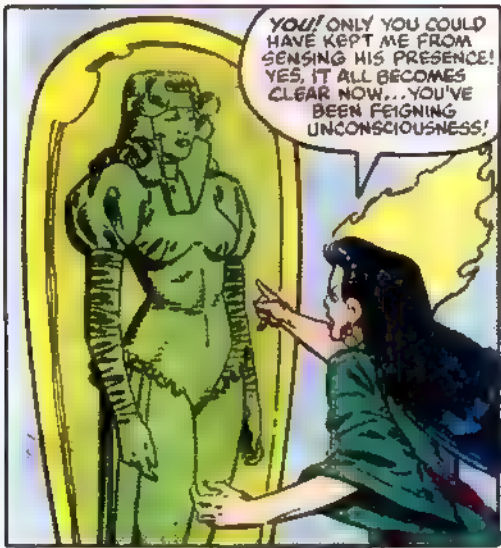
WHAT?!!



IMPOSSIBLE, I WOULD HAVE FELT THE EARTHMAN'S AURA, IF HE WERE THIS CLOSE! UNLESS...



YOU! ONLY YOU COULD HAVE KEPT ME FROM SENSING HIS PRESENCE! YES, IT ALL BECOMES CLEAR NOW... YOU'VE BEEN FEIGNING UNCONSCIOUSNESS!



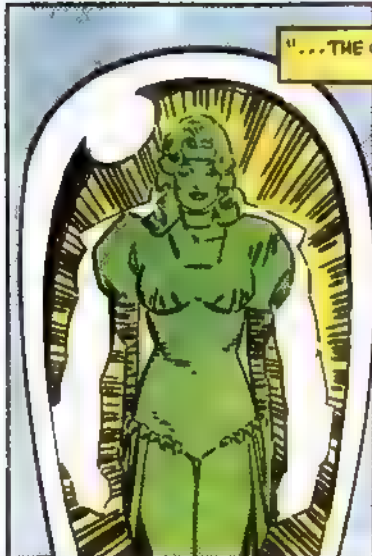
YOU ARE MISTAKEN, UMAR.

WHAT ARE YOU SAYING, ORINI... THAT SOMEONE OTHER THAN CLEA COULD SO DECEIVE ME?



NOT AT ALL, MISTRESS. BUT...

"...THE ONE YOU RAIL AGAINST IS NOT CLEA!"



IT CANNOT BE!!

WRONG
AGAIN, UMAR!
IT NOT ONLY
CAN BE...
IT IS!

THE BODILY SUBSTANCE OF
"ORINI" SEEMS TO BOIL OFF
INTO A MIST SO DENSE
THAT IT DEFLECTS UMAR'S
MYSTIC BOLT!

THE REBELLION
IS NOT FINISHED
YET, MOTHER!

AND IN THE NEXT
INSTANT, THE MIST
COALESCE INTO
ITS TRUE FORM!

HOW DARE
YOU CALL ME
THAT! I'LL SLAY
YOU WHERE YOU
STAND!

I DON'T
SLAY SO
EASILY!

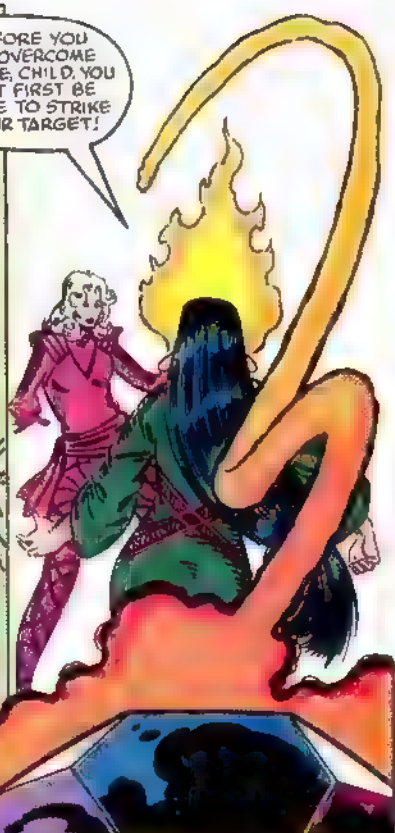
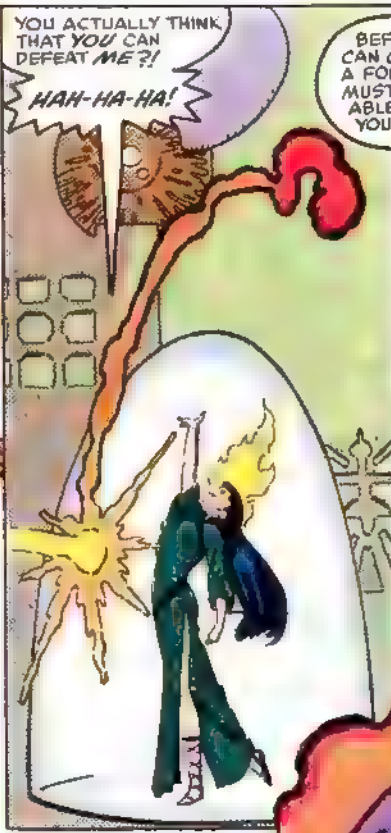
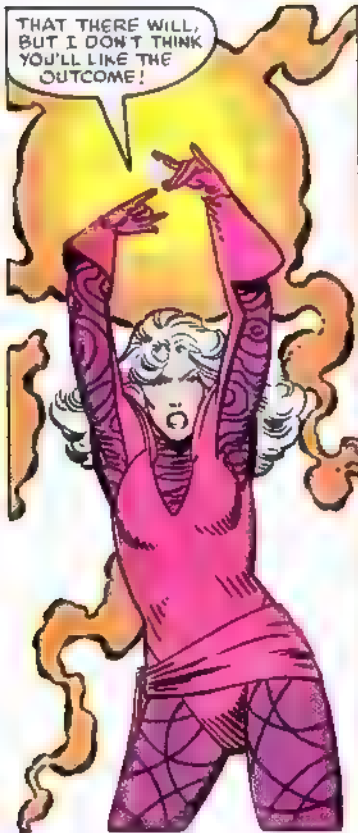
I'LL NOT TOLERATE
SUCH INSOLENCE! THERE
WILL BE A RECKONING--!

THAT THERE WILL,
BUT I DON'T THINK
YOU'LL LIKE THE
OUTCOME!

YOU ACTUALLY THINK
THAT YOU CAN
DEFEAT ME?!

HAH-HA-HA!

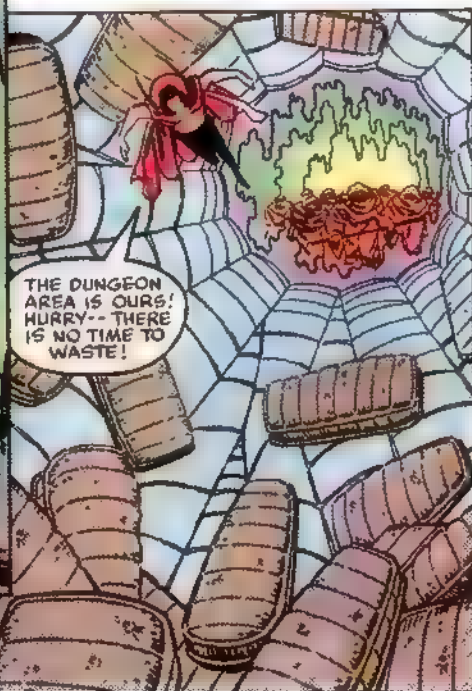
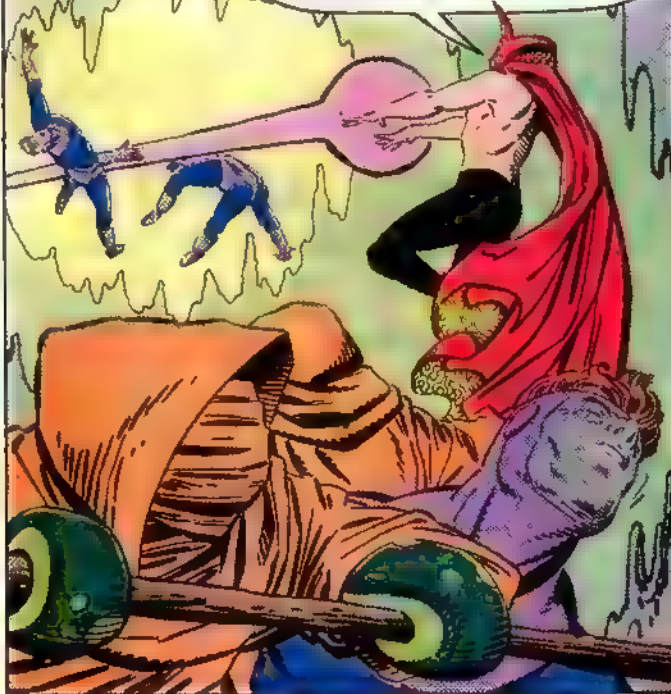
BEFORE YOU
CAN OVERCOME
A FOE, CHILD, YOU
MUST FIRST BE
ABLE TO STRIKE
YOUR TARGET!



BUT, CLEA'S SPELL FLIES
ON AND--UNSEEN BY
UMAR--IT DOES STRIKE
ITS TRUE TARGET SPARK-
ING A STEADY EERIE
GLOW!

AND, AT THAT MOMENT --

THESE ARE THE LAST REINFORCEMENTS
THAT WE NEED WORRY ABOUT! I'VE
SEALED THE REST OF THEM OUT!



THE DUNGEON
AREA IS OURS!
HURRY-- THERE
IS NO TIME TO
WASTE!



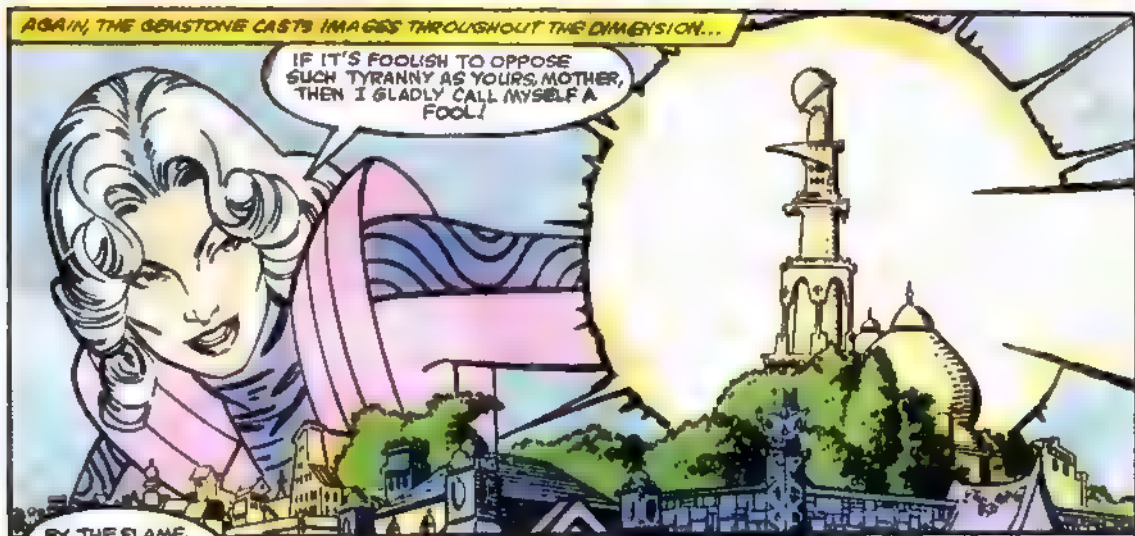
WE MUST FREE THE REBELS FROM THESE PODS AND REVIVE THEM BEFORE--!

STRANGE, LOOK... ABOVE US!



DO YOUR WORST--I SHALL NOT YIELD!

YOU LITTLE FOOL--!



AGAIN, THE GEMSTONE CASTS IMAGES THROUGHOUT THE DIMENSION...

IF IT'S FOOLISH TO OPPOSE SUCH TYRANNY AS YOURS, MOTHER, THEN I GLADLY CALL MYSELF A FOOL!

BY THE FLAME, LOOK! THE REBEL CLEA IS FREE! SHE'S ATTACKING UMAR!

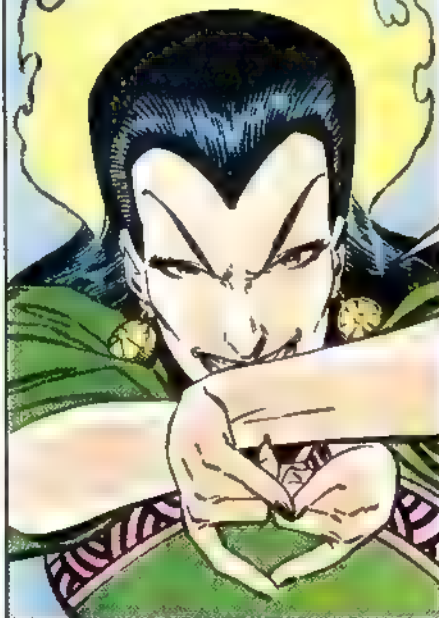
DID SHE CALL UMAR "MOTHER"?

IF CLEA IS FREE, THERE MAY BE HOPE FOR US YET!



YOU HAVE GROWN SKILLED IN THE SORCEROUS ARTS, CHILD! BUT I COMMAND ENERGIES WHICH ARE DENIED YOU!

I GAIN POWER FROM THE WORSHIPFUL SUPPORT OF MY SUBJECTS... AND I CAN DRAIN THE ENERGIES OF THE GREAT BARRIER!



THE BARRIER?!? YOU WOULDN'T DARE! IF IT SHOULD WEAKEN, THE MINDLESS ONES WOULD SWEEP ACROSS THE REALM... THOUSANDS WOULD DIE!



THAT MATTERS NOT! I CAN LAY THE BLAME AT YOUR FEET... THE SURVIVORS WILL BELIEVE WHATEVER I TELL THEM!

WHAT DID UMAR SAY?!

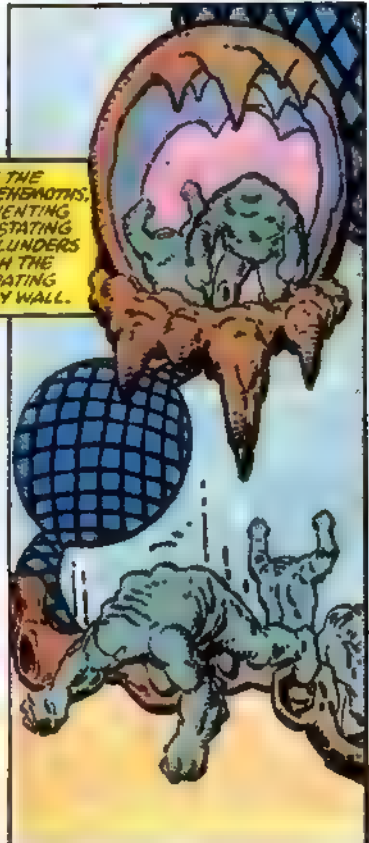
SHE WOULDN'T DO THAT... WOULD SHE?



ALONG THE DIMENSION'S OUTER REACHES-- WHERE THE INDESTRUCTIBLE MINDLESS ONES CONTINUE THEIR BRUTAL, NEVER-ENDING BATTLES-- THE SHIMMERING BARRIER, FIRST ERECTED SO LONG AGO, BEGINS TO FADE!

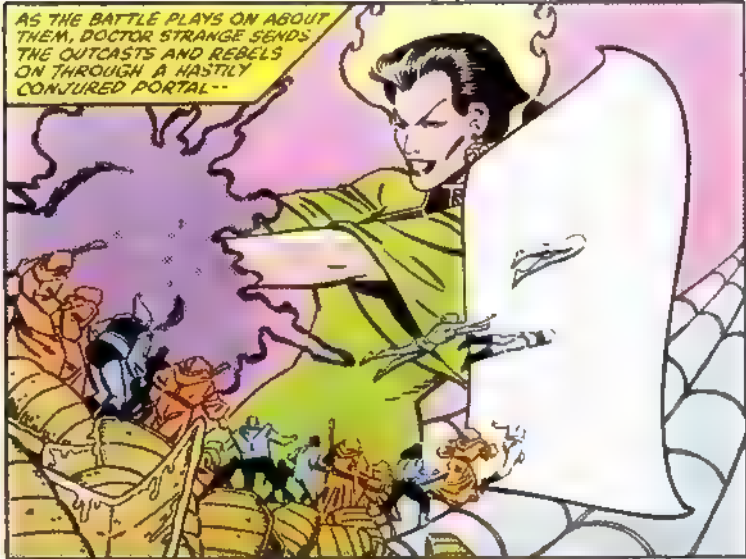


ONE OF THE SAVAGE BEHEMOTHS, BENT ON VENTING HIS DEVASTATING POWER, BLUNDERS THROUGH THE DISSIPATING ENERGY WALL.

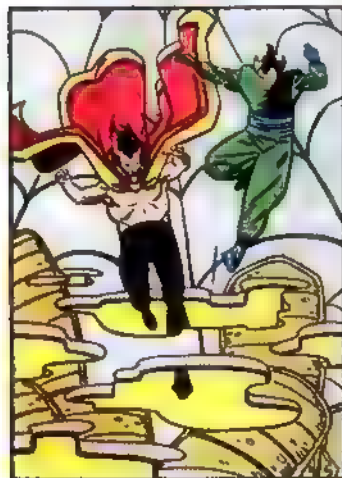


INSTINCTIVELY, THE OTHER CREATURES TURN AND FOLLOW... EAGER TO FIND FRESH TARGETS-- VULNERABLE TARGETS-- TO DESTROY!

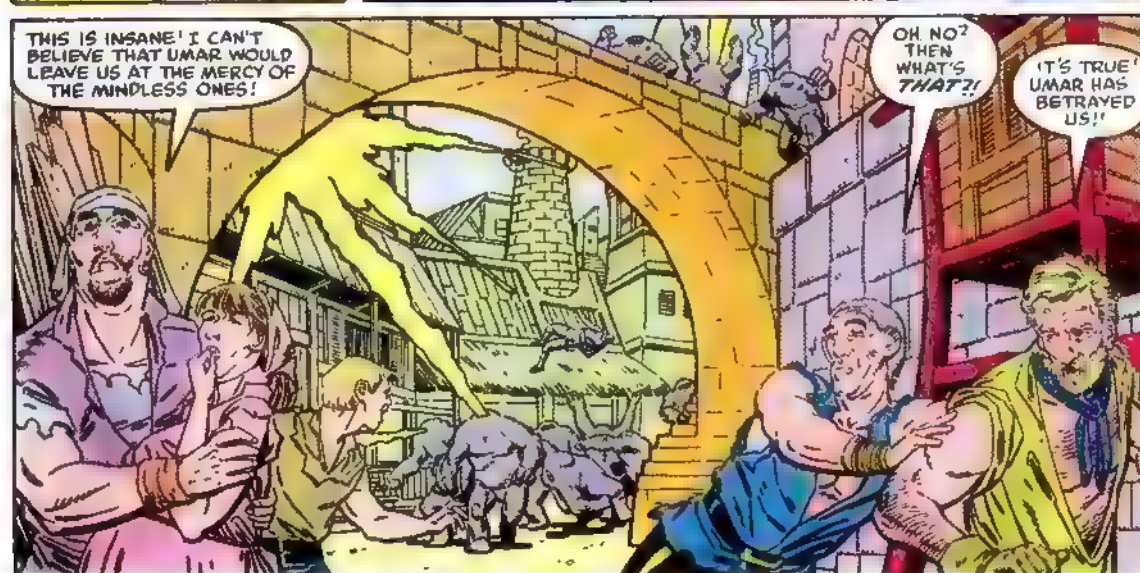
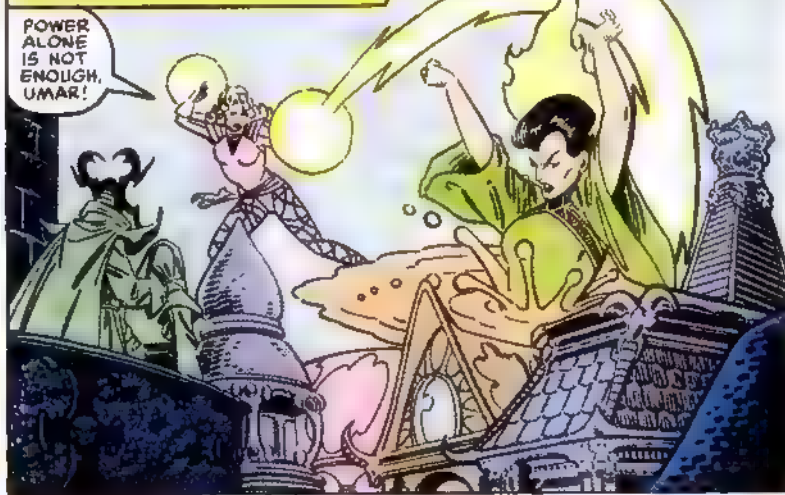


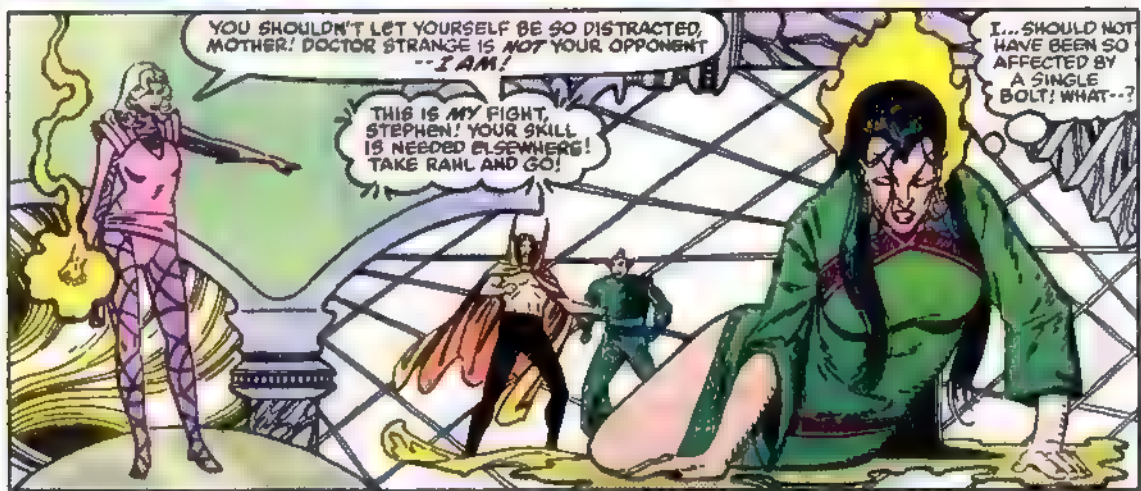
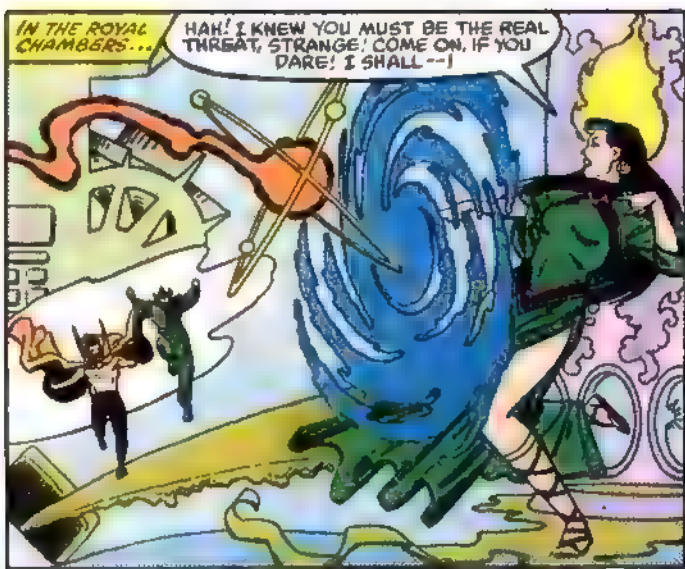


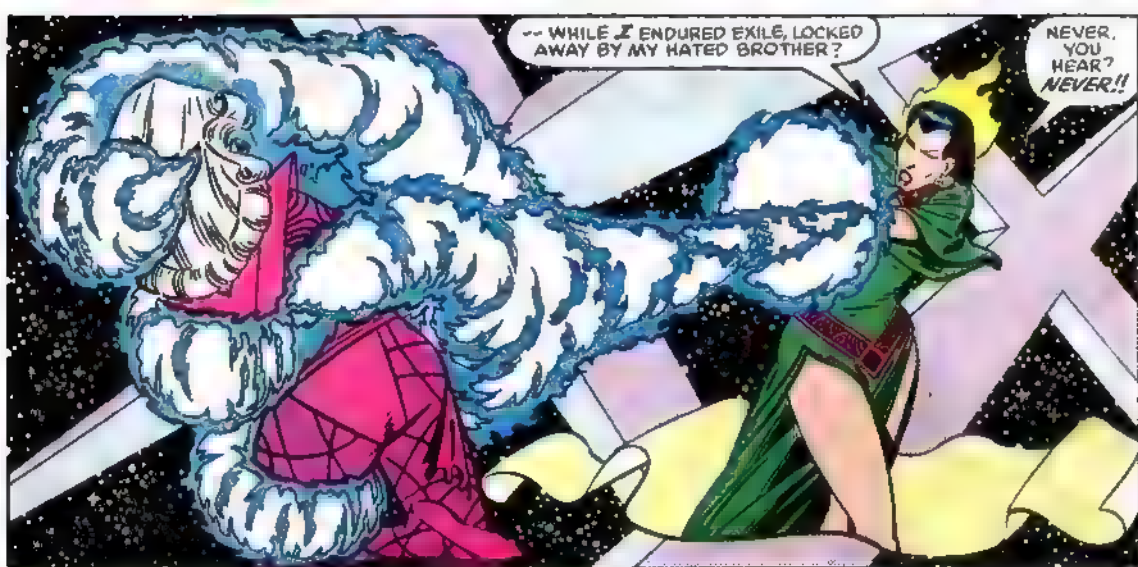
--WHILE HE AND THE REBEL LIEUTENANT DIVE ON INTO THE HEART OF THE PALACE!



AND ALL THE WHILE, THE EYES OF THE DIMENSION ARE ON THE HEAVENS..

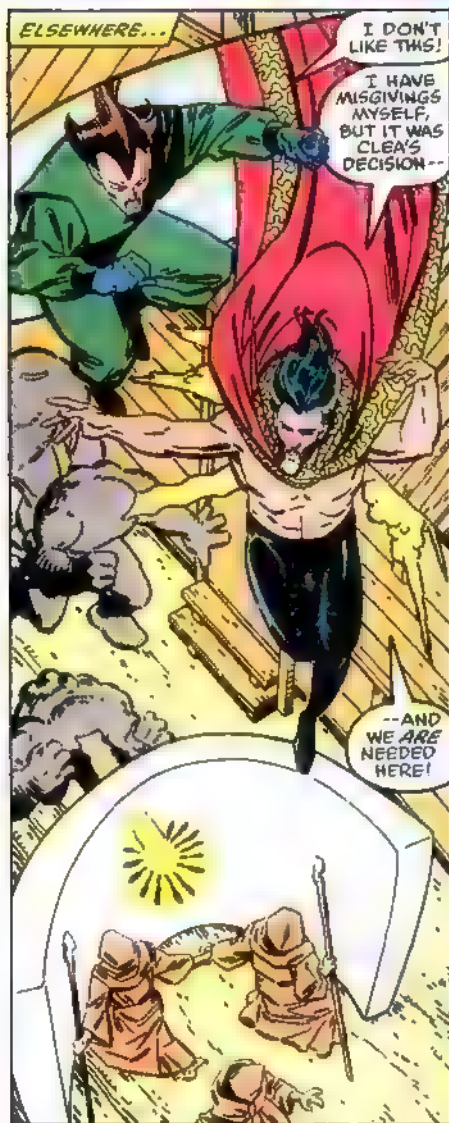






-- WHILE I ENDURED EXILE, LOCKED AWAY BY MY HATED BROTHER?

NEVER, YOU HEAR? NEVER!!

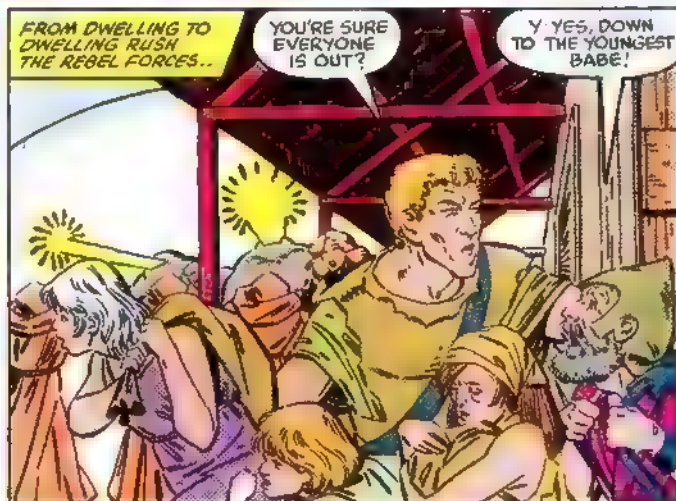


ELSEWHERE...

I DON'T LIKE THIS!

I HAVE MISGIVINGS MYSELF, BUT IT WAS CLEA'S DECISION--

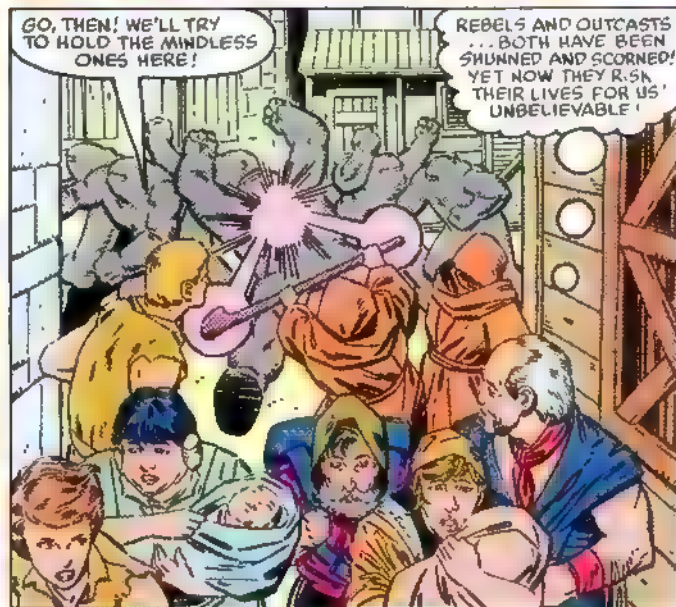
--AND WE ARE NEEDED HERE!



FROM DWELLING TO DWELLING RUSH THE REBEL FORCES...

YOU'RE SURE EVERYONE IS OUT?

Y YES, DOWN TO THE YOUNGEST BABE!



GO, THEN! WE'LL TRY TO HOLD THE MINDLESS ONES HERE!

REBELS AND OUTCASTS ... BOTH HAVE BEEN SHUNNED AND SCORNNED! YET NOW THEY RISK THEIR LIVES FOR US! UNBELIEVABLE!

VERY WELL, MY FRIENDS...
POOL YOUR WILLS WITH
MINE!

SEVEN RINGS
HAS RAGGADOORR,
FROM INDIGO TO
DEEPEST BLACK!
THEIR FABLED MIGHT
WE NOW IMPORE...
GRANT US THE POWER
TO FORCE THESE
BACK!



YEARS AGO, I ADDED MY POWER
TO THAT OF DORMAMMU TO HEED
THE MINDLESS ONES BACK TO
THEIR RESERVE.* I AM A
STRONGER SORCERER NOW
THAN I WAS THEN--

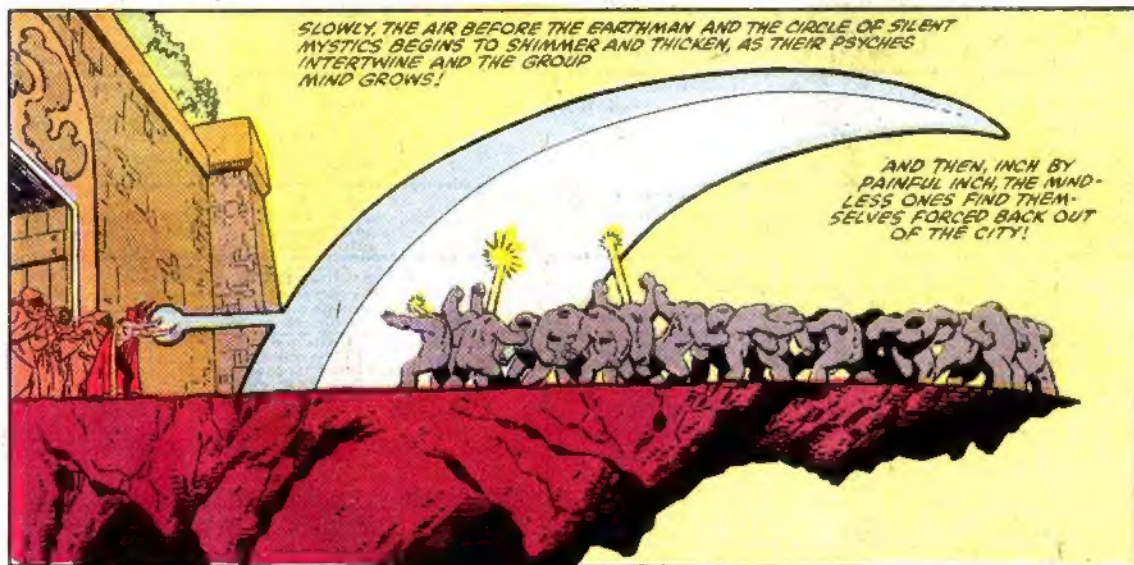
--BUT AM I STRONG
ENOUGH TO DO IT AGAIN
WITHOUT DORMAMMU'S
MAGIC? WILL THE COLLECTIVE
MINDS OF THE OUTCASTS
BE ENOUGH TO MAKE
THE DIFFERENCE?



*IN THE CLASSIC STRANGE TALES #127.

SLOWLY, THE AIR BEFORE THE EARTHMAN AND THE CIRCLE OF SILENT
MYSTICS BEGINS TO SHIMMER AND THICKEN, AS THEIR PSYCHES
INTERTWINE AND THE GROUP
MIND GROWS!

AND THEN, INCH BY
PAINFUL INCH, THE MIND-
LESS ONES FIND THEM-
SELVES FORCED BACK OUT
OF THE CITY!





NO, I WILL NOT
BE DEPOSED! I AM
UMAR... I AM A
DAUGHTER OF THE
MIGHTY FALTINE!
I WILL NOT BE
DENIED!

A TREMOR SEEMS TO RUN
THROUGH THE BIZARRE
PALACE ROYALE... THE
G'URANTIC GUARDIAN
BEGINS TO SHUDDER,
AS IF STRICKEN WITH
AN UNCONTROLLABLE
PALSY!



SIMULTANE-
OUSLY, ACROSS
THE DIMENSION...

IT IS
OVER! THE
MINDLESS
ONES ARE
SAFELY
SEALED
AWAY ONCE
MORE!



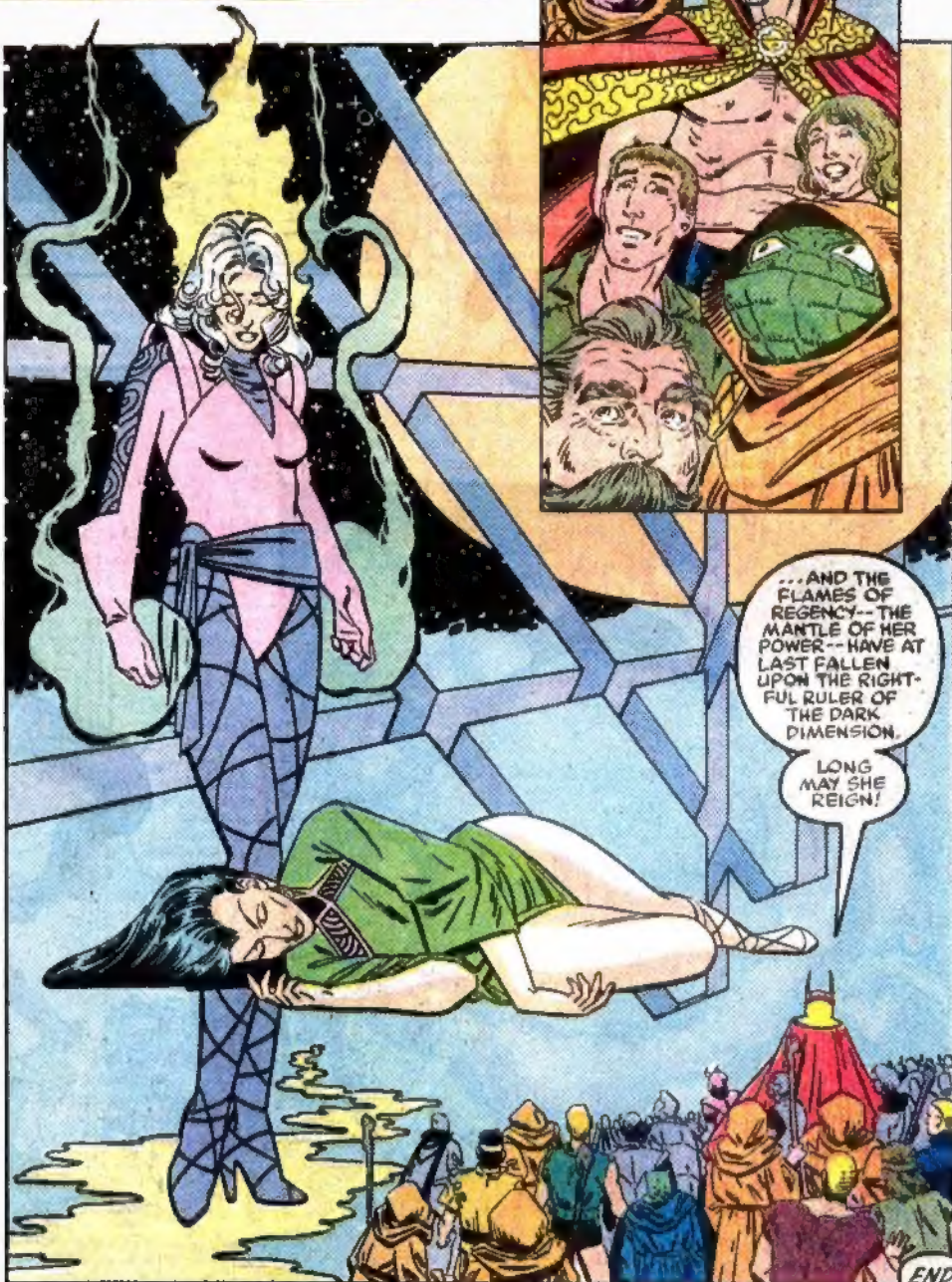


THANKS TO YOU, DOCTOR STRANGE! YOU PROVIDED A FOCUS FOR OUR DIMINISHED POWER. YOU GAVE US HOPE AGAIN!

OUTCAST, YOU SPOKE! BUT HOW--?



THE SPELL WHICH RENDERED THEM MUTE HAS BEEN BROKEN, RAHL! SEE FOR YOURSELF--UMAR HAS FALLEN...



...AND THE FLAMES OF REGENCY--THE MANTLE OF HER POWER--HAVE AT LAST FALLEN UPON THE RIGHTFUL RULER OF THE DARK DIMENSION.

LONG MAY SHE REIGN!

END